

**Lake Michigan Fisheries Team
January 26, 2001 – Sheboygan**

Notes

(prepared by Bill Horns, January 29, 2001)

Present: Bill Horns, George Boronow, Ron Fassbender, Terry Lychwick, Mike Toney, Mark Opgenorth, Vic Pappas, Chip Krohn, Brad Eggold, John Kubisiak, Steve Hogler, Sue Marcquenski, John Jannsen, Pradeep Hirethota, Matt Coffaro, Lee Meyers, Charlie Verhoeven, Paul Peeters, Randy Link, Gus Ernst, Tom Hansen, Fred Binkowski.

Next meeting: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Wednesday, March 7, Deland Center, Sheboygan

This is a summary of decisions, recommendations, and planned actions, and is not intended as a review of all topics discussed or reviewed at the meeting.

- 1) **Yellow perch in Green Bay.** The Team discussed the Green Bay yellow perch situation.

Action: The LMFT recommended advancing a rule (FH-12-01) to close sport and commercial fishing for yellow perch on Green Bay and its tributaries, and recommended further that the NRB be asked at its February meeting to approve hearings on this rule. It is understood that, after consideration of hearing comments and additional analyses of available data, the Department can modify the rule to permit limited, but still reduced, sport and commercial harvests.

- 2) **Relicensing criteria for Lake Michigan commercial fishers.** The rule modifying the criteria (FH-48-00) has been discussed at two hearings (January 12 and January 22), and a number of written comments have been received. The rule may be advanced in its present form, modified to reflect hearing comments (within limits), or removed from consideration. February 26 is the deadline for completion of the green sheet for rule adoption. Because I was not prepared to summarize the oral and written comments, the LMFT did not make a recommendation regarding the final form of the rule. I will summarize the comments in writing and circulate the summary to the Team.

Action: We agreed that a final LMFT recommendation regarding this rule would be made by the Policy Committee.

- 3) **Work planning for 2001-2003.** The LMFT reviewed past funded projects, and discussed some additional funding needs. The attached table summarizes ongoing or new projects that would require funding. We stopped short of prioritizing those projects, but will probably have to face that when we meet on March 7. Unless funding is available well above what has been initially projected, we will need to make some hard decisions about what work to cut. Right now, in SEG-funded sport fishing projects (Category 0), the **projected shortfall is \$38,000**. In SEG-funded commercial fishing projects (Category P), the **projected shortfall is \$26,218**.

Other projects for which alternate funding will be pursued include 1) studies of impacts of solid piers and groins (ISS funding, or, perhaps, Peterson Trust), 2) maintenance of the Barney (NE Regional equipment and maintenance budget), 3) walleye rearing and stocking in Sturgeon Bay vicinity (cooperative project with clubs using Peterson Trust), and 4)

provision of manpower and pump for Strawberry Creek pipeline, if needed (Salmon Stamp via Ops budget).

We also discussed significant time commitments that do not require additional funding. Those include (but I'm sure are not limited to) participation in updating the LMIFMP, work on the Lake Michigan Technical Committee, implementation of the recommendations of the Commercial Fishing Task Force, and the deep-water trap netting study.

Action: We agreed that SER will take primary responsibility for the maintenance and overwintering of the Perca.

- 4) **LMIFMP.** The Statement of Scope and Process calls for listening sessions during January-March, 2001. The purpose of these sessions is to develop lists of possible objectives (with problems and tactics) within specified issue categories. We need to decide when and where to schedule the meetings. The Lake Michigan Fisheries Forum was asked to reflect on the issues lists generated from the earlier meetings and elsewhere, and to suggest issue categories for these listening sessions. At length the Forum agreed that the issue categories used to define these sessions should correspond to the broad goals of both the expiring and new LMIFMP: 1) A diverse, balanced, and healthy ecosystem, 2) A diverse multi-species sport fishery within the productive capacity of the lake, 3) A stable commercial fishery within productive capacity of the lake.

Action: We agreed to hold listening sessions on the evenings of March 1 (Milwaukee), March 7 (Lakeshore Tech, Cleveland), and March 13 (Green Bay). Each session will be open to suggestions regarding all aspects of the program, but each will emphasize one of the three goals listed above.

- 5) **Proposed Green Bay smallmouth bass rule.** A rule proposed by Mike Bartz would create a catch and release smallmouth bass season from March 1 through the last Friday in May in the waters of Lake Michigan and Green Bay. This proposal will enter the annual sport fishing rule development process in the next cycle.

Action: The LMFT was not able to reach agreement on either endorsing or opposing the rule that has been proposed by Mike Bartz. I agreed to advance the proposal to the statewide bass committee for review and discussion.

- 6) **Spotted musky.** Terry Lychwick discussed the potential for enhancing the spotted musky program and broadening its genetic base by obtaining spotted muskie eggs from Lake St. Clair in cooperation with the Michigan DNR.

Action: The LMFT supports moving ahead with this project to the extent possible subject to funding and manpower limitations.

- 7) **Lakewide study of natural reproduction by chinook salmon.** At the recent meeting of the Lake Michigan Committee it was decided that Jim Bence (Michigan State University) will head up a group that will develop a lakewide study design and research proposal to estimate natural reproduction by chinook salmon.

Action: The LMFT recommended that Sue Marcquenski, Steve Fajfer, Paul Peeters, and John Kubisiak participate in project development. I will communicate this to Jim Bence.

Attachment to Lake Michigan Fisheries Team notes – January 26, 2001
Preliminary Funding Needs Analysis – 2001-2003

Category 0: Special Projects – Great Lakes Fisheries (\$353,508 from Salmon Stamp revenues and \$67,735 from SEG-License Fees have budgeted for this category.)

Salmon Stamp					
Region	Org	Activity	Project	new or ongoing	needed annual funding
NE	FHLK	FHCA	Lake trout restoration assessment/monitoring	ongoing	\$20,000
NE	FHLK	FHCC	Steelhead broodstock management; inc. weir data collection	ongoing	\$10,000
NE	FHLK	FHHZ	Coho/chinook broodstock management; inc. weir data collection	ongoing	\$22,000
NE	FHUG	FHCB	Assess brown trout strains	ongoing	\$4,000
NE	FHUG	FHCD	Oconto River habitat work	ongoing	\$5,000
NE	FHLK	FHNL	Nearshore rainbow project, tagging study	ongoing	\$5,000
NE	FHLK		Naturalist for Kewaunee facility	new	\$15,000
SE	FHSL	FHCR	Lake Michigan sport fishing creel survey	ongoing	\$107,000
SE	FHSL	FHIC	Analysis of Lake Michigan creel survey data	ongoing	\$14,000
SE	FHSL	FHSE	Salmon and trout stocking evaluation; inc. weir data collection	ongoing	\$28,000
NOR projects – estimate based on FY00 funding					\$127,412
Total					\$357,412

SEG-License Fees					
Region	Org	Act	Project	new or ongoing	needed annual funding
NE	FHLF	FHCH	Assess walleye fishery on lower Fox River	ongoing	\$3,900
NE	FHLF	FHDO	Southern Green Bay sport fishing creel survey	ongoing	\$30,000
NE	FHUG	FHCG	Assess yellow perch population in Green Bay	ongoing	\$12,000
NE	FHUG	FHDN	N. pike habitat improvements- follow-up past work	ongoing	\$9,000
NE	FHUG	FHJZ	Assess sturgeon populations in Green Bay tributaries	ongoing	\$2,000
SE	FHSL	FHCG	Assess and monitor yellow perch population in L. Mich.	ongoing	\$12,000
SE	FHSL	FHJX	Predation on stocked salmon by stocked walleye	ongoing	\$2,000
SE	FHSL		Smallmouth bass survey in L. Mich. harbors	new	\$5,000
SE	FHSL		Assessment of tributary fish communities following dam removal	new	\$6,000
CO	FHFA		Travel and meals for Lake Michigan Fisheries Forum	new	\$3,000
WCR and NOR projects - estimate based on FY00 funding					\$21,200
Total					\$106,101

Category P: Special Projects – Commercial Fisheries (\$39,463 from SEG-License Fees has been budgeted for this category.)

Region	Org	Act	Project	new or ongoing	needed annual funding
NE	FHLK	FHBJ	Commercial catch data management	ongoing	\$13,000
NE	FHLK	FHCV	Determine commercial harvest quotas; inc. coop acoustic work	ongoing	\$10,000
NE	FHUG	FHBK	Yellow perch commercial catch monitoring on Green Bay	ongoing	\$10,000
NE	FHLK		Travel and meals for Lake Michigan Commercial Fishing Board	new	\$2,000
SE	FHSL	FHHL	Assess y. perch recruitment in LM; support research and YPTG	ongoing	\$7,000
SE	FHSL	FHOC	Maintenance of Perca	ongoing	\$5,000
NOR projects - estimate based on FY00 funding					\$18,680
Total					\$65,681